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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/601,037	06/19/2003	Hannu Huotari	ASMMC.047AUS	8258
20995	7590	08/04/2004		EXAMINER
				NOVACEK, CHRISTY L
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/601,037	HUOTARI, HANNU
	Examiner Christy L. Novacek	Art Unit 2822

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 May 2004.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-3,5-24 and 27-42 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3,5-24 and 27-42 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 20 May 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/23/04.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

This office action is in response to the amendment filed May 20, 2004.

Response to Amendment

The limitations added to claims 1, 15 and 42 are sufficient to overcome the rejections of claims 1-3, 5-24, 27, 28, 33-38 and 40-42 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bai et al. (US 6,166,417).

Drawings

The replacement drawings received on May 20, 2004 are approved. The objection to the drawings is hereby withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-3, 5-24, 27, 28, 33-38 and 40-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bai et al. (US 6,166,417, previously cited) in view of Elers et al. (WO 01/29893 A1, previously cited).

Regarding claim 1, Bai discloses a gate stack in an integrated circuit having PMOS and NMOS regions, a dielectric layer (120), and a barrier layer (125) that overlies both the PMOS and NMOS regions (Fig. 2 and 9; col. 3, ln. 6-35). Bai states that the function of the barrier layer is to “inhibit interaction between the gate dielectric and the gate electrode.” Thus, the barrier layer must be able to keep metal atoms in the gate electrode from diffusing into the underlying

gate dielectric. Bai does not disclose that the barrier layer is a nanolaminate; nor does Bai disclose by what method the barrier layer may be deposited. Like Bai, Elers discloses depositing a barrier layer onto a layer of SiO_2 dielectric. Elers states that it is advantageous to form barrier layers such that they are nanolaminates because nanolaminates “have enhanced diffusion barrier properties” by virtue of their structure having “very complicated diffusion paths for impurities through disruption of normal crystal growth during deposition” (pg. 8, ln. 20-25). The nanolaminate barrier layer is formed by an ALD (atomic layer deposition process) (pg. 1, ln. 28-32). At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to form the barrier layer of Bai such that it is a nanolaminate deposited by ALD because Elers teaches that a nanolaminate structure provides enhanced diffusion barrier properties and Elers teaches that ALD is the way in which such a structure is created.

Regarding claims 2, 3, 23 and 24, Bai discloses that the barrier layer may be TiN or TaN, both of which are conductive material (col. 3, ln. 51-54).

Regarding claims 5, 6, 27 and 28, Bai discloses that the barrier layer has a thickness of 5 – 200 (col. 3, ln. 36-37).

Regarding claim 7, Bai discloses that the gate stack includes a first gate electrode layer (130 or 135) and a second gate electrode layer (130 or 135) (col. 3, ln. 55-65; col. 4, ln. 41-53).

Regarding claims 8 and 17, Bai discloses the first and second gate electrode layers are adjacent (Fig. 7).

Regarding claims 9 and 18, Bai discloses that the first gate electrode layer includes a first gate electrode material and the second gate electrode includes a second gate electrode material (col. 3, ln. 55-65; col. 4, ln. 41-53).

Regarding claims 10, 11, 19 and 20, Bai discloses that if the first gate electrode is made of N-type material, the second electrode will be made of P-type material, and vice-versa. The first gate electrode material may include nickel or ruthenium oxide if the material is to have the work function of a P-type doped semiconductor or may include ruthenium if the material is to have the work function of an N-type doped semiconductor. The same is true for the second gate electrode. Hence, the first and second gate electrodes will be made of different conductive materials. See col. 1, ln. 42-54; col. 3, ln. 55 – col. 4, ln. 9; col. 4, ln. 41-53).

Regarding claim 12, Bai discloses that the first gate electrode may overlie the PMOS region (115) and the second gate electrode may overlie the NMOS region (105) (col. 3, ln. 1-16; col. 4, ln. 4-9).

Regarding claims 13 and 14, Bai discloses that the work functions of both the first and second gate electrodes is determined by the materials (130/135) of the first and second gate electrodes (col. 3, ln. 48-51).

Regarding claim 15, Bai discloses depositing a dielectric layer (120) over first and second regions (105/115) of a substrate, depositing a barrier layer (125) directly over the dielectric layer such that it overlies both the first and second regions, and forming first and second gate electrode layers (130/135) over the first -and second regions, respectively (col. 3, ln. 17 - col. 4, ln. 64). Bai states that the function of the barrier layer is to “inhibit interaction between the gate dielectric and the gate electrode.” Thus, the barrier layer must be able to keep metal atoms in the gate electrode from diffusing into the underlying gate dielectric. Bai does not disclose that the barrier layer is a nanolaminate; nor does Bai disclose by what method the barrier layer may be deposited. Like Bai, Elers discloses depositing a barrier layer onto a layer of SiO₂ dielectric.

Elers states that it is advantageous to form barrier layers such that they are nanolaminates because nanolaminates “have enhanced diffusion barrier properties” by virtue of their structure having “very complicated diffusion paths for impurities through disruption of normal crystal growth during deposition” (pg. 8, ln. 20-25). The nanolaminate barrier layer is formed by an ALD (atomic layer deposition process) (pg. 1, ln. 28-32). At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to form the barrier layer of Bai such that it is a nanolaminate deposited by ALD because Elers teaches that a nanolaminate structure provides enhanced diffusion barrier properties and Elers teaches that ALD is the way in which such a structure is created.

Regarding claim 16, Bai discloses that one of the regions is a PMOS region and the other region is an NMOS region (col. 3, ln. 8-16).

Regarding claim 21, Bai discloses that the first and second gate electrode materials may be made of nickel, ruthenium oxide or ruthenium (col. 1, ln. 41-53; col. 4, ln. 3-9; col. 4, ln. 42-53).

Regarding claim 22, Bai discloses that one of the gate electrodes may be made of a metal nitride (MoN) (col. 1, ln. 41-53).

Regarding claim 33, Bai discloses depositing a layer of first gate electrode material (130 or 135 can be considered “a first gate electrode layer”) over the first and second regions of the substrate (Fig. 4 and 6).

Regarding claim 34, Bai discloses removing the first gate electrode material from over the second region without removing the underlying barrier layer (Fig. 5 and 7).

Regarding claim 35, in the event that the material 135 is considered to be the first gate electrode material, Bai discloses that the first gate electrode material is removed from over the second region by chemical mechanical polishing (col. 4, ln. 55-64).

Regarding claim 36, Bai discloses depositing a layer of second gate electrode material (130 or 135 can be considered “a second gate electrode layer”) over the first and second regions of the substrate (Fig. 4 and 6).

Regarding claim 37, in the even that the material 130 is considered to be the first gate electrode material, Bai discloses that the first gate electrode material is removed from over the second region by differential etching (col. 29-33).

Regarding claims 38 and 41, Bai discloses depositing a layer of second gate electrode material (130 or 135 can be considered “a second gate electrode layer”) over the first and second regions of the substrate and removing the second gate electrode material from over the first region without removing the underlying barrier layer (Fig. 5, 7 and 8).

Regarding claim 40, Bai discloses etching the barrier layer over portions of the second region to a thickness of 0 Angstroms (Fig. 8).

Regarding claim 42, Bai discloses depositing a dielectric layer (120) over first and second regions (105/115) of a substrate, depositing a barrier layer (125) directly over the dielectric layer such that it overlies both the first and second regions, depositing a first gate electrode material (130 or 135) over the first and second regions, removing the first gate electrode material from over the first region without removing the barrier layer, depositing a second gate electrode material (135 or 130), and defining a first and second electrode in the first and second regions.

Claims 29-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bai et al. (US 6,166,417) in view of Elers et al. (WO 01/29893 A1), as applied to claim 15 above, and further in view of Pomarede et al. (US 6,613,695, previously cited).

Regarding claims 29-32, Bai discloses that the gate dielectric layer may be SiO₂, but Bai does not disclose a method of forming the dielectric layer, nor treating the dielectric layer to remove OH groups. Pomarede teaches that it is advantageous to treat a layer such as SiO₂ with a mixture including ammonia (nitrogen-hydrogen) plasma and nitrogen radicals in the event that the SiO₂ layer will be covered with a layer of material deposited by ALD (col. 8, ln. 61 – col. 9, ln. 35). This process inherently replaces OH groups on the surface of the SiO₂ with nitrogen atoms. Pomarede states, “By changing the surface termination of the substrate [SiO₂] with a low temperature radical treatment, subsequent deposition is advantageously facilitated without significantly affecting the bulk properties of the underlying material.” (Abstract). At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to treat the surface of the gate dielectric film of Bai as is taught by Pomarede because Pomarede teaches that it is advantageous to treat the surface of a layer that will have an ALD subsequently deposited thereon.

Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bai et al. (US 6,166,417) in view of Elers et al. (WO 01/29893 A1), as applied to claim 15 above, and further in view of Chang et al. (US 6,660,630, previously cited).

Regarding claim 39, Bai does not disclose depositing a layer of conductive material over the first and second gate electrode layers. However, as is disclosed by Chang, it is necessary in the fabrication of semiconductor devices such as that of Bai, to deposit multi-layered conductive

interconnection structures above the gates of a semiconductor device in order to provide required wiring to the gates of the device (col. 1, ln. 34-65). Such structures are well-known in the art.

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to deposit conductive material over the first and second gate electrode layers of Bai for the purpose of forming a multi-layered interconnection structure that connects the gate with upper-level wiring because such structures are necessary to the function of the gate and are well-known in the art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed May 20, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding claims 1, 15 and 42, Applicant argues that Elers allegedly fails to provide motivation for forming the barrier layer of Bai such that it is an ALD nanolaminate because Elers' barrier layer is used in a damascene structure, whereas Bai's barrier layer is used in a gate electrode. The motivation for combining the teachings of Elers with the invention of Bai is that Bai teaches no method of forming the barrier layer, while Elers teaches that the specific method of forming a barrier layer such that it is a nanolaminate deposited by ALD serves to form an unusually successful barrier layer because such a layer has "very complicated diffusion paths for impurities through disruption of normal crystal growth during deposition". Elers teaches that, in particular, this barrier layer can be used to prevent diffusion between an overlying metal layer and an underlying silicon oxide layer. Bai's invention includes a barrier layer designed to "prevent physical interaction" (diffusion) of an overlying metal layer and an underlying silicon

oxide layer. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the diffusion barrier formation method of Elers to form the diffusion barrier of Bai.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christy L. Novacek whose telephone number is (571) 272-1839. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and alternate Fridays 7:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amir Zarabian can be reached on (571) 272-1852. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

CLN
July 29, 2004

Maria Guerrero
MARIA F. GUERRERO
PRIMARY EXAMINER